

Creating an Internal Board of Directors with your clients

During Lori Shook's WBECS coaching demonstration, **Internal Change vs Quick Fixes**, Lori had her client access his **Internal Board of Directors**. This helped him tap into his internal world rather than defaulting to problem solving or focusing only on external actions he could take.

One of the ways to ensure that you are coaching using your client's internal world, is to help them build some internal resources and access points – like values or a “board of directors”. Invest time early in your coaching relationship to build these kinds of resources.

These steps will help you and your client create an internal Board of Directors:

Set context with your client: *For example, “I would like to work with you to define some resources that we can use throughout our coaching together. We all have different internal ‘voices’ or ‘characters’ that influence our behaviours. When we clarify them and even name them, we will be able to use them as a resource when we work on a specific topic later. Are you up for that?”*

Questions to help identify board members

First, identify some different voices

- *What is an inner voice that you really trust?*
- *What are the inner characters that help you succeed in important situations?*
- *What are the different ways you behave at different times?*
- *What are the inner impulses that get in your way in important situations?*
- *What part (or parts) of you come out when you are stressed – the unhelpful one(s)?*

Shape, define and name them

Guide your client to shape and define each character according to how it shows up naturally. Each one will have a unique personality and will drive certain behaviours in the client. And they all have some value – there are no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ board members, although some will be more useful than others at different times. Ask the client to name each, e.g., ‘The Energiser’, Bob, Frankenstein, etc.

Aim for about 5-8 board members.

Tips for coaching

It is quite common that people overly rely on a subset of their board when they could benefit from bringing out some of the quieter voices. Support them to get to know the different characters and the situations where they show up uninvited. Then support the client to take leadership, to invite out the board members they want to use more and to find ways to manage the ones that show up uninvited.

Remember: the purpose of this work is to help the client create the impact they want to have, and to take ownership of their behaviours.